

Lady Rebels in Final Four

■ South Choctaw waxes Sumter at Elite Eight, now plays Crenshaw Christian, then winner of Autauga/Warrior for state championship

By Colin Merritt
The Choctaw Sun

MONTGOMERY — The South Choctaw Lady Rebels were certainly a favorite entering their first-round game against eighth-seeded Sumter Academy in the AISA Class 1A Elite Eight in Montgomery on Thursday. Not only did the Rebels win big, 52-30 over Sumter, a team they have now beaten four times this season, but they looked really good in doing so.

Lady Rebels
52
Sumter
30

“We played our best game on defense for sure,” Rebels Head Coach Charlie Taylor said of his squad that allowed just one field goal to Sumter in the game’s first three periods. “We didn’t hit shots like we normally do on offense, but hopefully we can work that out by Wednesday and go into the Final Four clicking on all cylinders.”

The Rebels will advance to the Final Four for the second time in two years thanks to a big night from their senior trio of Kate Dahlberg, Arielle Campbell and Bridget Kwasiak.

Dahlberg had a huge game in the win against Sumter, scoring 25 points

with eight rebounds, four steals and four assist, while Campbell added 11 points and three blocks, and Kwasiak had six points and four steals. The trio helped the Rebels race out to a 20-1 first period lead, which led to a 34-7 halftime advantage.

Senior Lauren Jackson added two points and seven rebounds, and junior Koen Lindsey scored three points in the win for the Rebels.

With the win, South Choctaw (22-6) will now face Crenshaw Christian (11-16) in the Final Four in Montgomery at Huntingdon College on Wednesday (2/14) at 4 p.m.

Even though Crenshaw has a losing record, they are still dangerous because of their slow-down style according to Coach Taylor.

“They are the direct opposite of us,” commented Taylor of his fast-break Rebels’ match with a Crenshaw side that likes to hold the ball. “We like to run and they like to slow it down. They like to keep it in the 20’s and we want to score in the 50’s. Basically it will be two contrasting styles of play. Tempo will certainly determine the outcome of this game.”

If the Rebels beat Crenshaw, they will then play the winner of the Autauga/Warrior game at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday (2/15) in the Class 1A state title game at Huntingdon College in Montgomery.

Good luck Rebels!



Arielle Campbell



Lauren Jackson

Indians crack Keith

■ Southern Choctaw beats Keith in first-round to set up showdown with powerhouse R.C. Hatch for 2A Area 5 title

Indians
64
Keith
58

UNIONTOWN — The Southern Choctaw Indians faced a win-or-else game in their first-round match with Keith in the 2A Area 5 tournament in Uniontown on Friday night. The Indians won, 64-58, to keep their season alive and eliminate Keith.

The victory now sets up a championship game against third-ranked host R.C.Hatch

after presstime on Monday night. Regardless of the outcome in that final game, however, the Indians will still advance to the sub-regional part of the state tournament next Friday.

Southern Choctaw (16-6) actually trailed Keith by six early in the fourth period before taking the lead back for good midway through the period.

SCHS’s Chaney and White honored

■ Indians’ defensive coordinator Charles Chaney, and current Abbeville head coach and SCHS alumni Rico White pick up awards at ALFCA

By Colin Merritt
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Southern Choctaw’s defensive coordinator Charles Chaney, along with former Indian player and current Abbeville head coach Rico White, received awards at the Alabama Football Coaches Association Coach of the Year Banquet. At the February 3rd event, White picked up the Coach of the Year hardware in 3A for his work leading the Abbeville Yellow Jackets, and Chaney was named the Class 2A Assistant Coach of the Year for his job with the Indians’ defense.

White, who turned a 2-8 Abbeville squad into a 9-3 playoff team in his second year as head coach, was a 1989 graduate of Southern Choctaw that later went on to star at Alabama State where he was named Freshman of the Year at tailback. During his playing time at Southern Choctaw, White started in the Indians’ backfield from 1985-89 and helped lead the then-Class 3A Indians to back-to-back quarter-final appearances.

After graduating from Alabama State with a degree in education, White played in the 1994 Senior Bowl in Mobile. Then, after brief stints as a player with the Dallas Cowboys and Jacksonville Jaguars in the NFL, White became an assistant coach at Central-Haneyville High School.

In 2005, White was named head coach at Abbeville, a team that had

won just five games in five years.

Now in just his second year, White has not only led the school to eleven wins and a playoff berth, he has restored the confidence of a Yellow Jacket team that has been a traditional homecoming opponent. This year, the perennial-underdogs were scheduled for six homecoming games. They won all six on their way to a second-round playoff appearance.

ALFCA Award Winners

- Class 1A**
Frank Watford/Sunshine
Eric Bailey/Maplesville
- Class 2A**
Danny Powell/Leroy
Charles Chaney/SCHS
- Class 3A**
Rico White/Abbeville
Dick Chastain/Geneva
- Class 4A**
Tom Causey/Andalusia
Todd Smith/Oak Grove
- Class 5A**
Jim Vakakes/Fairfield
Freddie
Lawrence/Demop.
- Class 6A**
Roger Haynes/Sparkman
Rick Chancery/Daphne

(Head Coach of the Year listed first, Assistant Coach of the Year listed second.)

“Receiving awards is great, but to see our kids win for the first time in years is the real reward,” said White, who also won the Wiregrass Area Coach of the Year award for Class 3A through 6A. “Now everybody’s talking about winning a state championship. We are on the right track.”

Rico is from Cul-lomberg and is the son of Walter and Mary Louis White. He now lives in Abbeville with his wife, Kristen, and their three children, Chelsea 10, Rico Jr. 7, and two-week-old, Roman Isiah.

Current Southern Choctaw defensive coordinator Charles Chaney garnered the 2A Assistant Coach of the Year nod thanks to a stingy Southern Choctaw defense that gave opponents fits during another Indian playoff run.

Chaney is in his second term leading the Indian defense, having been at Southern Choctaw for a total of six years in between stints at Choctaw County High.

“It’s a great feeling to have your peers say you are doing a good job,” commented Chaney of the honor.

Lady Indians done after Hatch loss

■ Jekita Moody leads Indians with eight points in season-ending loss

ORRVILLE — The Southern Choctaw Lady Indians finished a rather uneventful basketball season with a 54-18 loss in the 2A Area 5 tournament to R.C. Hatch on Thursday.

In the loss, Southern

Choctaw was led by Jekita Moody with eight points and Brittany White with six. Cassandra Foster added four for SCHS.

The Indians finished their season with a 1-19 record.

Lady Indians
18
R.C. Hatch
54

Lady Tigers’ season ends at Greensboro

GREENSBORO — Despite their recent run of good play, the Choctaw Lady Tigers fell short, 48-36, in their first-round loss in the 3A Area 5 tournament to top-seed Greensboro. The season-ending loss dropped the Tigers to 8-16 on year.

Lady Tigers
36
Greensboro
48

“It’s disappointing because we were peaking at the right time,” Head Coach Aria James said of her team that had won three of their last six games heading into the area tournament.

“But we just started the season so cold, and unfortunately had to play from the four-seed in this tournament. We should have played better earlier so maybe we could have had a better first-round match-up.”

The Tigers did themselves no favors against Greensboro, trailing early and never leading in a game that stayed close throughout.

Despite trailing just 19-14 at the break, Choctaw County had four-straight turnover to start the second half, basically ending any hopes the team had of a comeback.

In the loss, Choctaw County got 21 points from freshman Kamille Horne, including a 10-of-11 performance from the free throw line.

Hoops Players of the Year announced next issue!
Don't forget to vote!

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